

CAIN THE FIRST EMERGENT WORSHIPER

February 18, 2009 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article)

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The emerging church says Christians should worship God in their own individual ways, through art, dance, whatever.

Rick Warren says, “There is no one-size-fits-all approach to worship and friendship with God” (*The Purpose Driven Life*, p. 103).

On pages 22-28 of his book *Sacred Pathways: Discover Your Soul’s Path to God*, Gary Thomas says that there are nine ways that people draw near to God: Naturalists are inspired to love God out-of-doors; sensates love God with their senses; traditionalists love God through rituals, liturgies, unchanging structures; ascetics love God in solitude and simplicity; activists love God through battling injustice; caregivers love God by meeting people’s needs; enthusiasts love God through celebrations; contemplatives love God through adoration; and intellectuals love God by studying.

This sounds like Cain, who was the first emerging worshipper. He wanted to approach God and delve into spiritual things, but he wanted to do it on his own terms rather than follow the precise instructions of God’s Word. He didn’t want to be “boxed in.”

Cain was the firstborn son of Adam and Eve and his younger brother Abel was a prophet (Luke 11:50-51). God spoke through Abel and instructed the family that He was to be approached through the sacrifice of a lamb, which pointed to the coming of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ (Hebrews 12:24). Abel obeyed and brought the prescribed offering, shedding its blood and killing it as God had instructed. Cain decided to come on his own terms, instead, and brought an offering of the vegetables that he had grown with his own hands. It was an emerging, cool, artsy type of worship! Abel offering by faith in God’s Word, whereas Cain offering in the presumption of his own thinking (Heb. 11:4). God rejected Cain’s offering and accepted Abel’s (Genesis 4:1-11), and as a result Cain killed his own brother.

As David Moss says in *God’s Song*, (Fundamental Evangelistic Association, Fresno, CA):

“Cain thought that the most important thing in life was for him to express himself. He thought God would be pleased if he used his own imagination in offering a creative form of sacrifice. Why was God not pleased? Because God did not want human imagination or ‘creativity’ as a gift. Rather, He wanted conformity to His precise plan. Humans reject this dogmatic rigidity and substitute for it their theory of existential relativism. As each one tills and cultivates his own life, he will inevitably express reality differently from others. There must be, therefore--according to

man's imagination--many legitimate roads to follow in order to accommodate the many different orientations of people and the many different ways in which they express themselves. ... It is when we allow the agents of sensuality to enter our worship that the order and peacefulness of worship is destroyed, not enhanced. The expressiveness of the individual becomes more important than what pleases God. God is expected to be happy because men and women are giving Him something they 'grew with their own hands,' but in the process, the sacrifice of Cain is repeated over and over again to the music of the modern church" (David Moss, *God's Song*, pp. 46, 49).

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